

Message Text

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ACTION SNM-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-13
JUSE-00 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 USIA-06 NSC-05 OES-06 OMB-01
DODE-00 AGRE-00 /053 W
-----191859Z 099092 /40
R 190340Z JAN 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2244

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 0846

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR
SUBJECT: DRUG CONTROL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS: ITALY

REF: STATE 301146

SUMMARY: THERE FOLLOWS THE EMBASSY'S REPOSE TO THE
REQUEST FOR INFORMATION CONTAINED IN REFTEL. END SUMMARY.

1. HEROIN AND OTHER OPIATES.

(A) ASIAN HEROIN HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY AVAILABLE IN ITALY
OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS. ASIAN HEROIN #3 (BROWN SUGAR)
HAS BEEN AND CONTINES TO BE THE TYPE AVAILABLE ON THE
ITALIAN MARKET. IT GENERALLY ARRIVES FROM HOLLAND WITH
ONLY ISOLATED CASES OF HEROIN ARRIVING DIRECTLY FROM THE
FAR EAST FOR CONSUMPTION WITHIN ITALY. THERE IS NO KNOWN
INDICATION OF WHITE DRAGONPEARL HAVING BEEN ENCOUNTERED
IN ITALY. ONCE DURING 1975 2 KGS. OF ASIAN HEROIN #4 (WHITE)
WERE SEIZED IN MILAN. HOWEVER, THIS WAS ONE OF THE RARE
OCCASIONS WHEREIN #4 HEROIN HAS BEEN NOTED IN ITALY AND THE
ONLY OCCASION IN WHICH A SIGNIFICANT QUANTITY WAS SEIZED.

(B) OTHER SOURCES. THERE ARE NO CURRENT INDICATIONS OF
HEROIN ARRIVING IN ITALY FROM THE MIDDLE EAST. HOWEVER,
A RECENT ISOLATED SIZURE INDICATES THE AVAILABILITY OF
SMALL QUANTITIES OF MORPHINE BASE FROM THE MIDDLE EASTERN
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AREA (I.E. SEIZURE OF 2-1/2 KGS. IN ROME AND NEGOTIATIONS
FOR 15 KGS. IN MILAN).

(C) TRAFFICKING PATTERNS. DURING THE PAST YEAR IT HAS
BEEN NOTED THAT A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF HEROIN SIZED
IN WESTERN EUROPE HAS TRANSITTED ITALY (ROME FIUMICINO
AIRPORT) ENROUTE TO HOLLAND (APPROX. 100 KGS. SEIZED IN
1976 WHICH TRANSITTED ITALY). THE RECENT TRAFFICKING TREND

HAS BEEN THAT COURIERS COMING FROM THE FAR EAST FLY COM-MERCIALLY TO ROME THEN PROCEED BY TRAIN TO HOLLAND. THE COURIERS ARE MOSTLY MALAYSIAN AND THAI; HOWEVER, OTHER NATIONALITIES HAVE BEEN NOTED.

RECENTLY, A PROGRAM HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED WITH THE ITALIAN NATIONAL POLICE (INP) TO INITIAATE MORE RIGID CONTROLS AT FIUMICINO AIRPORT. AS A RESULT OF THIS PROGRAM 26.410 KGS. OF HEROIN WERE SEIZED AT FIUMICINO DURING DECEMBER 1976. ONLY ONE NOTED SEIZURE OF HEROIN WHICH TRANSITTED ROME TOOK PLACE IN DECEMBER 1976 (3.390 KGS. ON 12/23/76 SEIZED AT LUXEMBOURG ABOARD TRAIN FROM ROME).

THERE IS NO EVIDENCE TO INDICATE ANY PROCESSING FACILITIES WITHIN ITALY. SOME INTELLIGENCE HAS BEEN RECEIVED WHICH INDICATES A REMOTE POSSIBILITY OF A PROCESSING FACILITY EXISTING IN ITALY; HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN NO EVIDENCE TO SUBSTANTIATE THIS.

ALTHOUGH ITALY HAS IN THE PAST BEEN A TRASIT COUNTRY FOR THE U.S., THERE IS CURRENTLY NO INFORMATION WHICH WOULD INDICATE THAT IT CONTINUES TO BE SO. IN FACT, ALL RECENT DOCUMENTED EFFORTS BY U.S. ORGANIZED CRIME FIGURES TO OBTAIN HEROIN THROUGH PREVIOUSLY ESTABLISHED SOURCES IN ITALY HAVE BEEN NEGATIVE.

ASIAN #3 HEROIN OF APPROXIMATELY 30 PERCENT PURITY IS CURRENTLY SELLING IN ITALY FOR \$100 TO \$150 PER GRAM AND \$25,000 TO \$40,000 PER KG. FOR APPROXIMATELY 50 PERCENT PURITY HEROIN. THERE HAS BEEN A GRADUAL INCREASE IN THE PRICE OF HEROIN OVER THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS; HOWEVER, IT IS BELIEVED THAT THE INCREASED PRICE IS RELATED TO THE INFLA-TION RATE, AS THE HEROIN ITSELF HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY CONFIDENTIAL

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AVAILABLE. THE ONLY AVAILABLE FIGURE FOR MORPHINE BASE IS BASED ON THE SEIZURE OF 2-1/2 KGS. IN ROME DURING OCTOBER 1976. THIS SEIZURE WAS OF 80 PERCENT PURITY AND WAS TO SELL FOR \$17,000 PER KG.

INTELLIGENCE INDICATES THAT TRAFFICKERS WITHIN ITALY ARE INVOLVED IN OTHER ORGANIZED CRIMES AS WELL AS MANY LIGITI-MATE BUSINESSES.

THERE IS NO INFORMATION TO INDICATE ANY INVOLVEMENT IN NARCOTICS SMUGGLING BY HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

(D) FINANCIAL FACTORS. THERE IS NO SPECIFIC INFORMATION CURRENTLY AVAILABLE REGARDING UNUSUAL MONEY FLOW BETWEEN ITALY AND CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA, MEXICO, CANADA, SOUTHEAST ASIA AND THE FAR EAST. HOWEVER, A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF COCAINE IS SMUGGLED INTO ITALY FROM SOUTH AMERICA PREDOMINATLY COLOMBIA.

THERE IS NO INFORMATION AVAILABLE IN ITALY WHICH WOULD SUBSTANTIATE THAT HEROIN IS BEING CACHED IN THE BANKS OF MEXICO, CARRIBEAN COUNTRIES, OR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES.

THERE IS NO SPECIFIC INFORMATION THAT INVESTMENTS IN

LEGITIMATE BUSINESS MAY HAVE BEEN DERIVED FROM PROFITS OBTAINED FROM ILLICIT NARCOTICS TRAFFICKING. HOWEVER, IT IS A JUSTIFIABLE ASSUMPTION THAT INVESTMENTS ARE BEING MADE IN THIS MANNER. COMMERCIAL COVER SUCH AS CANNING ESTABLISHMENTS HAVE LONG BEEN USED TO FACILITATE ILLICIT NARCOTICS TRAFFIC. THERE HAS BEEN SOME INTELLIGENCE RECEIVED THAT NARCOTICS HAVE BEEN SHIPPED TO THE U.S. INSIDE OF TOMATO AND TOMATO PASTE CANS DURING RECENT YEARS. VOLPE

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DODE-00 AGRE-00 /053 W
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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2245

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 0846

2. OTHER SUBSTANCES. COCAINE IS THE DRUG OF CHOICE WITHIN THE MAJOR CITIES OF ITALY. THERE APPEARS TO BE A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF COCAINE ENTERING ITALY FROM SOUTH AMERICA. THIS TRAFFIC INVOLVES ITALIAN FINANCIERS WITH THE COURIERS BEING PREDOMINANTLY S.AMERICANS. THE MAJORITY OF THE COCAINE SMUGGLED INTO ITALY IS FOR LOCAL CONSUMPTION. CANNABIS IN ITALY IS MOSTLY AVAILABLE IN THE FORM OF HASHISH WITH SMALLER AMOUNTS OF MARIHUANA AND HASHISH OIL EMERGING ON OCCASION. THE HASHISH GENERALLY ARRIVES IN ITALY FROM THE MIDDLE EAST AND MOROCCO. THE METHODS OF TRANSPORTATION ARE GENERALLY BY TRAPPED AUTOMOBILES TRAVELLING OVERLAND OR ARRIVING BY FERRY. SMALL CRAFT AND COMMERCIAL VESSELS HAVE ALSO BEEN USED IN SMUGGLING HASHISH INTO ITALY. IN THE PAST YEAR SOME COLOMBIAN MARIHUANA HAS ALSO EMERGED ON THE ITALIAN MARKET. HOWEVER, HASHISH IS AVAILABLE AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME COST AS MARIHUANA, THUS MAKING HASHISH THE PREFERRED OF THE TWO. THERE APPEARS TO BE A VERY LIMITED USE OF AMPHETAMINES, BARBITURATES, TRANQUILIZERS, LSD AND OTHER HALLUCINOGENS WITHIN ITALY.

3. CONSUMPTION AND TREATMENT. AS PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED,

STATISTICS CONCERNING CONSUMPTION AND TREATMENT OF THE USER POPULATION ARE NOT AVAILABLE IN ITALY; THEREFORE, STATISTICAL RESPONSES IN THIS AREA ARE AT BEST ESTIMATES. (NOTE: AT THE PRESENT TIME NEITHER THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, THE MINISTRY

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OF INTERIOR OR THE INP COMPILE OR MAINTAIN ANY STATISTICS WHICH COULD BE UTILIZED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT. THE INFORMATION CONTAINED HEREIN IS BASED SOLELY UPON DEA RECORDS OF SEIZURES, INTELLIGENCE AND STIMATES UTILIZED BY ITALIAN POLICE OFFICIALS.) THE GENERAL USER POPULATION APPEARS TO BE CENTERED WITHIN THE OLDER TEENAGE AND EARLY 20'S GROUP, WITH THE AMOUNT OF MALE USERS EXCEEDING THE FEMALES.

(A) AN OFFICIAL TREATMENT PROGRAM HAS RECENTLY BEEN PROVIDED FOR UNDER ITALIAN LAW. CURRENTLY THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 800 USERS REGISTERED UNDER THIS PROGRAM.

THIS PROGRAM IS ACCOMPLISHED THROUGH FUNDING OF EXISTING LOCAL REHABILITATION CENTERS LOCATED IN THE MAJOR CITIES. AT THE PRESENT TIME MANY OF THESE CENTERS ARE STAFFED BY INEXPERIENCED HELP WITH LITTLE IF ANY DIRECTION.

(B) THERE ARE NO KNOWN STATISTICS ON THE NUMBER OF PRIVATE TREATMENT CENTERS WITHIN ITALY. THERE ARE THREE CENTERS IN ROME WITH APPROXIMATELY 300 REGISTERED USERS UNDER THEIR PROGRAMS.

(C) SOME USERS IN ITALY ARE CURRENTLY INCARCERATED; HOWEVER, UNDER THE NEW NARCOTICS LAW (12/22/75) USERS WHO ARE NOT CONVICTED OF OTHER NARCOTIC ORIENTED CRIMES ARE NOT INCARCERATED. THERE IS NO KNOWN PROGRAM FOR PROVIDING JOBS FOR USERS, NOR IS IT FELT THAT SUCH A PROGRAM WILL BE INSITUTED.

(D) AN ESTIMATE OF THE UNTREATED DAILY OR REGULAR USERS OF HEROIN OR OPIATES IS ROUGHLY 5,000. THIS IS ONLY A GUESS DUE TO THE UNAVAILABILITY OF FIGURES, STATISTICS OR SURVEYS IN ITALY AND IS BASED ON LIMITED INFORMATION OBTAINED FROM ITALIAN POLICE OFFICIALS, DEA INVESTIGATIONS AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT TYPICAL USERS ADMINISTER APPROXIMATELY 15-30 MG. PER DAY.

IN ITALY COCIANE IS THE MAJOR DURG OF CONCERN ALONG WITH HEROIN. FROM AN ENFORCEMENT STANDPOINT, ALMOST AN EQUAL AMOUNT OF PRIORITY IS GIVEN TOWARDS ITS INTERDICTION AND CONTROL.

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THERE ARE RELATIVELY FEW INFORMATIONAL MATERIALS, SUCH AS FILMS, BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS AVAILABLE IN ITALY AT THE PRESENT

TIME. MOST OF THE AVAILABLE LITERATURE HAS BEEN OBTAINED
THROUGH THE U.S. DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION AND THE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DRUG ABUSE.VOLPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770020-0433
Format: TEL
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Office: ACTION SNM
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 301146
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3558038
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DRUG CONTROL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS: ITALY
TAGS: SNAR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fde1a2d4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009